

Annual Equality Report



2007/08

assessment
communication
monitoring
training
cohesion

gender
sexuality
disabilities
belief
age
ethnicity



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Purpose of this report

Welcome to North Norfolk District Council's first Annual Equality Report. The report aims to tell you about all the things we are doing to:

- ▶ **Improve the accessibility of our services**
- ▶ **Ensure we are a fair and supportive employer**
- ▶ **Improve Community Cohesion**
(Improving relations between people from different backgrounds)
- ▶ **Increase awareness and understanding of diversity and equality issues across the Council and in the community**

Background

Various pieces of legislation have been introduced in recent years to guide us in improving access to services and improving community relations. The main outcome of this law is that we have to prepare Disability, Gender and Race Equality Schemes. In these Schemes we have to write down:

- The difficulties people can face when trying to use our services
- Any community tensions between people from different backgrounds
- Any gaps in services
- Our employment practice
- How we know what the issues are
- What we plan to do about it and when

We have three Equality Schemes in place. The Disability Scheme was published in December 2006 and the Gender Scheme in April 2007. Our Race Equality Scheme is being updated at the moment and will be published in May 2008.

The Council has also signed up to the national Local Government Equality Standard. The Standard provides a way of working in local authorities that makes the mainstreaming of equality into service delivery and employment an issue for all aspects of a local authority's work. By working through the Standard, local authorities are able to identify disadvantage associated with race, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation and age (the six equality strands) and set targets to eliminate the barriers that create disadvantage. There are five levels to achieve. At the moment NNDC is at level 1; we are working towards reaching level 3 in 2008.

To find out how we are managing to improve access the Council has completed the Audit Commission's self-assessment toolkit called 'Knowing Your Communities'. This is designed to help councils:

- Assess their current progress
- Benchmark with others
- Understand what they need to do to improve their performance

The toolkit covers a number of areas:

- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Age equality
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Religion
- Human rights
- Community engagement
- Customer focus

The idea of the assessment is that if an authority knows its communities well, is aware of their needs, experiences and aspirations, it can start to improve services that better meet residents' needs and address any tensions that exist within the community. The results show we have some work to do, which is why we are spending time getting to know our communities through a number of projects. See 'Getting to know our communities' on page 6.

Getting to know our communities

When the Council completed the 'Knowing Your Communities' assessment, the results showed that while we generally communicate well with residents, there is still room for improvement. The results showed that we need to engage more with the following groups.

- **Disabled people**
- **Black and minority ethnic communities (BME)**
- **Faith/belief groups**
- **Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender residents**
- **Young people**
- **Older people**

Talking to disabled residents

During 2006, together with the police and other local authorities in Norfolk, we talked to disabled residents about what services they find difficult to access. The top three answers were that buildings, benefits service and the way we communicate can prove difficult for some people. As a result, this year we have completed Impact Assessments of our Buildings, Benefits and Communications services. You can find out more about these assessments on page 13.

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Community cohesion

This is a new area of work for the Council. In the last 18 months we have, in conjunction with our partners across the county, used our Citizens Panel to run attitudinal surveys about Age, Disability, Gender, Ethnicity, Sexual Orientation, Transgender and Faith/belief.

The Citizens Panel is a panel of 1000 people in North Norfolk, broadly representative of the population. However, the panel tends to be under-represented in terms of young people and black and minority ethnic residents, therefore we are planning to work with the North Norfolk Youth Steering group to undertake an analysis of young peoples' experiences of inequality. We are also working with partners across Norfolk to complete a study of community cohesion with residents, including Black and Minority Ethnic residents.

The results of this work, coupled with the findings of the consultations listed below, will inform the refreshment of our Race Equality Scheme and the development of a Community Cohesion Strategy during 2008.

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Gypsies, travellers and settled communities – promoting good relations

Gypsies and Travellers are a part of North Norfolk life and always have been. Historically they have visited the District for work, recreation and pilgrimage. The Council believes that in order to promote good community relations, and to meet recent government guidance, we need to provide sites or stopping places for Gypsies and Travellers in the District.

The Council has looked at the historic patterns of movement of Gypsies and Travellers over the past 10 years and worked with other authorities in Norfolk to establish demand for Gypsy and Traveller facilities across the county. This work has established that there is no need to provide permanent facilities in the District but that short-stay transit sites should be provided in the Cromer/Sheringham and Fakenham areas, as part of the strategy for the future management of unauthorised encampments.

A Gypsy and Traveller Forum was set up by the Council in 2006 to promote a greater understanding of the issues involved, particularly in those parts of the District with a history of unauthorised encampments.

The Forum was presented with information relating to the demand for Gypsy and Traveller facilities in the District based upon historic patterns of visits, the legislative context in which the Council and partners such as the police operate, and considered a long list of potential site options in the Cromer / Sheringham and Fakenham areas. At the end of this process, the Forum agreed to recommend to the District Council that it should seek to provide, with capital grant funding from the Government, short stay stopping place facilities for Gypsies and Travellers on a site adjacent to the District Council's offices in Cromer and on a small area of land off the A148 road to the north-east of Fakenham.

The Council has therefore developed detailed plans for facilities at these two locations and is now undertaking a public consultation exercise on the draft proposals in advance of submitting planning applications for the two facilities early in 2008.

A leaflet and a consultation questionnaire inviting comments on the proposals were delivered to the communities closest to the proposed facilities. The consultation leaflet and questionnaire were also sent to all Town and Parish Councils, District and County councillors in North Norfolk and stakeholder organisations such as business groups and bodies representing the Gypsy and Traveller community. The consultation exercise was supported by two public meetings in November in Cromer and Fakenham.

The analysis of the consultation responses is being undertaken by Fordhams Research, an independent consultancy specialising in housing issues, employed by the District Council to support this piece of work.

The outcome of the consultation exercise will be used to inform revisions/amendments to the draft proposals in advance of formal planning applications being submitted.

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How warm is our welcome?

Earlier this year, we conducted a series of interviews with migrant workers in Cromer and Fakenham to find out about their experiences of living in North Norfolk and if they have any difficulties accessing our services.

All the participants said that they feel very welcome in North Norfolk and they say that the locals are generally very considerate towards them. Despite these very positive feelings about the area, many of the participants had experienced similar experiences to some local residents such as problems with housing, health care and benefits, and lack of recreational activities (especially for teenagers). Comments were also made about difficulties in finding long term work and English classes that fit in with shift patterns.

The results of this work are being considered alongside other national studies around the contribution and needs of migrant workers. The Council's response will be detailed in the forthcoming Race Equality Scheme to be published in May 2008.

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Belief and faith groups

Feeling comfortable in our community is important to people. Part of this comfort includes feeling able to practice either a religion or belief, or feeling comfortable in choosing *not* to practice a religion or belief. We feel we need to understand more about the following to provide a good service to residents:

- Any difficulties people may have in accessing Council services or employment on the grounds of religion or belief
- Any community tensions or discrimination experienced in relation to religion or belief
- The contribution that faith or belief groups make to the community
- How to engage more effectively with faith and belief groups.

To address this we are conducting a survey using the Citizens Panel to ask all residents about these issues. We are also planning an event in late spring 2008 to meet with belief and faith groups to explore these issues further.

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Talking to older residents

This year the Council's Communities Team has continued to support the North Norfolk Older Persons Forum.

The object of the Forum is to benefit all older people in North Norfolk by working with the providers of public services to:

- monitor, challenge, advise and comment on services used by older people
- raise the profile of older people within North Norfolk
- act as a focal point for consultations about policies and services that affect older people in North Norfolk

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Getting to know young people

Young people often feel excluded from decisions that affect their community. They see other people making the decisions, holding the purse strings and the power. To address this we have established a core group of young people aged between 13 – 22, who will embark on a training programme designed to promote active involvement in the Council's decision-making processes.

We will also be approaching the Youth Steering Group to undertake an analysis of young peoples' experiences of inequality.

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Gender inequality and deprivation

Evidence shows that women are more vulnerable to and likely to spend longer periods of time living in poverty (Source: The Poverty Alliance). Women are also more susceptible to poverty as an older person and their experience of poverty tends to differ from that of most men.

In Norfolk, 46 per cent of all lone parent households are located outside the larger towns, resulting in a significant number being in smaller settlements. These households tend to be headed by women. (Source: Deprivation in Rural Norfolk, OCSI, December 2006.)

We aim to explore deprivation and gender in North Norfolk next year.

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Engaging with transgender and transsexual residents

This year we have been working with local and national organisations to learn more about the needs of transsexual people and what we can do to make sure our services and potential employment with us is accessible. The final report is due to be published in 2008.

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Talking to staff

An important part of our equalities work is making sure we keep in touch with our staff to ensure that we are a good employer. To do this Unison has become a member of the Council's Equality and Diversity Board.

Unison is the one of the largest public sector trade unions in the UK, with affiliate groups all over the world. At North Norfolk District Council, Unison is the main union with over 50 per cent employee subscription.

Unison is at the forefront of campaigning for equalities in the workplace and in local communities. Supporting equality is about showing solidarity with people who encounter or experience discrimination. This includes conducting research and campaigning for change, where change is needed to improve equality for all. Increasing awareness of equality issues across all the equality groups ('the six equality strands') is a task undertaken at branch, regional and national level.

By involving Unison in the formation of policies and procedures, North Norfolk District Council can tap into the diverse networks and trained branch officers who can provide information and advice to ensure that all relevant issues are addressed.

North Norfolk District Council has taken a proactive approach towards addressing Equality issues within the authority and Unison has been able to contribute to the project by:

- Jointly assessing new and existing policies and functions
- Designing and determining the criteria for equality impact assessments
- Jointly reviewing the outcomes of Equality Schemes
- Identifying Key Staff Groups for specific training e.g., field officers
- Redesigning questionnaires to ensure that they are free from prejudice and bias, thus ensuring quality data is received
- Consulting on health and safety matters for disabled visitors, members and staff e.g., fire evacuation procedure

Equality rights in the UK and North Norfolk are evolving and Unison is a key supporter and contributor to a growing and equal environment.

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Quality of life survey

As well as the work listed above, we regularly keep in touch with residents to find out about their needs and aspirations using surveys. We make sure we analyse the results of surveys using categories of ethnicity, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation and age wherever possible. By doing this we can identify if there are any differences in people's experiences of using our services or living in North Norfolk.

For example, every three years the Council completes a quality of life survey called the General Best Value Performance Indicator Survey. In 2006, this showed that 59 per cent of North Norfolk residents are pleased with the way the Council runs things. The 12 per cent who are dissatisfied tend to be people who work full time, people who are not aware of the work the council does and young people. This means that we need to:

- Talk to people who work full time and young people to find out what the problems are
- Find out who isn't aware of the work the Council does and look at how we can improve the way we communicate with them

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Planning survey

Every three years the Council completes a Best Value Survey which measures the level of satisfaction with the planning service by those making a planning application. The survey was undertaken in 2006 and of the 300 responses received, 88% were either very satisfied or satisfied with the service provided by the Planning Service in processing their planning applications. This was a six per cent improvement on the previous survey carried out in 2003 and the highest score of the District Councils in Norfolk.

The responses were looked at in relation to ethnicity/disability/gender and age and taking into account the confidence intervals associated with the statistics there was no evidence that people within any of these groups were more or less satisfied with the planning service than all planning customers.

The Planning Service will continue to look for ways to improve performance for all of its customers and monitor progress by analysing the results of the next Best Value Survey and by continuing to listen to its customers.

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Monitoring

As well as talking to people, one of the other ways we can see if our services are open to all our residents is by monitoring who uses them. An example of this might be to look at the age profile of people who use our gyms and leisure facilities and compare it to the age profile of people living in the catchment area for that facility. If we saw that a particular group wasn't using these services, e.g. young people or disabled people, it would tell us we need to look closer and see if there are things we can do to improve access or if another type of recreational service is needed.

We already monitor our employment practice (see page 14 and 16) and response to racial incidents (see below). However, in addition, this year we are identifying ways of monitoring the usage of our services and the Council's policy for doing this is expected at the end of spring 2008.

BVPI 174 (Number of racial incidents reported/ 100,000 population) is recorded as two per cent.
BVPI 175 (Percentage of racial incidents) response is 100 per cent, which is good performance.

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Population figures

In addition to consultation and monitoring, another piece of information the Council can use to help plan better services is by looking at population figures.

Migrant workers

Historically, the North Norfolk District has had only very small numbers of people from black and minority ethnic communities (0.8 per cent of the District's resident population in 2001) and there have been no significant issues of poor community relations/tensions. However, since the EU Accession Countries joined the European Union in 2004 there has been an increase in the number of people from BME groups.

In the period May 2004 to June 2007, some 1305 migrant workers had secured employment in the North Norfolk District as recorded through the Migrant Workers Registration Scheme – more than doubling the numbers of BME/white other people (ie non-British) living in the District since 2001. The majority of such workers are employed in the Business Administration, Agricultural, Hospitality, Manufacturing and Health/Care sectors. At March 2007, 50 dependents of such workers were also living in the district.

While the number of migrant workers employed in the District is lower than in the neighbouring Breckland (3640) and Kings Lynn and West Norfolk (5020) local authority areas, the number living and employed in North Norfolk is significantly higher than in the Broadland (330), South Norfolk (330) and Great Yarmouth (480) local authority districts. Significantly, the North Norfolk District also has a smaller workforce and lower economic activity rates than other Norfolk districts, reflecting the aged population profile and high numbers of retired people. Therefore the migrant worker workforce can be seen to be locally significant in supporting business and economic activity in the District.

Work undertaken on behalf of Norfolk local authorities by Ipsos MORI to establish public satisfaction with local government services in the autumn of 2006 identified that in those parts of the county where there was a high level of migrant workers – particularly Breckland and

Kings Lynn and West Norfolk, but also in Great Yarmouth, there were some signs of growing tension between the indigenous and migrant populations.

North Norfolk District Council identified the need to learn from the experiences of these communities in considering the needs of migrant workers and their families wishing to take up employment in North Norfolk. The Council and the North Norfolk Community Partnership (NNCP) therefore engaged Ipsos MORI in September 2007 as part of the refreshment of the North Norfolk Community Strategy to undertake a peer group survey of migrant workers in the District to develop an understanding of their experiences and expectations of public services in the district. This project was called 'How Warm is our Welcome'. (See page 5.)

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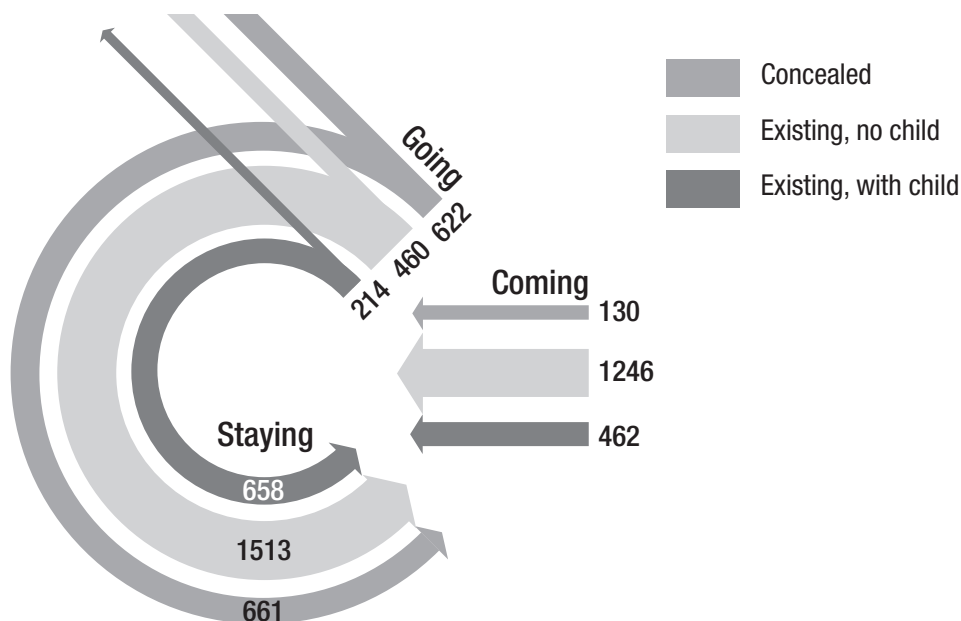
Migration of young and old people

The diagram below shows the key migration patterns in North Norfolk. The categories are explained below:

- Concealed families, refers to young people living at home
- Existing with no children, refers to older people who either have no children or their children have left home
- Existing with child, refers to young families

ANNUAL CYCLE OF MOVES

Source: North Norfolk 2006 Housing Needs Survey



It shows that each year young people are moving out of North Norfolk while older residents are moving in. This reiterates the need for us to talk to residents more to find out what the needs of older residents are and what isn't being provided to encourage young people to remain in the area.

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Making sure change happens

1. Training

Staff and Members

Talking to residents and finding out how we need to improve our services is only part of the story. We need to train our staff and members to make sure that we can make the improvements needed.

We hold training and awareness raising events to make sure our staff are aware of difficulties residents may face in accessing our services or taking up employment with us. In December 2006 we held an event at Sheringham Little Theatre with the Moving Parts Theatre Company to explore attitudes to disability and the Council's Disability Equality Scheme. The event was successful and led to other sessions being scheduled into the Council's training programme such as 'How to use a hearing loop' and 'Accessible information surgeries'.

2. Proactive

Community engagement project

We are working with Ashmanough Parish Council and Holt Town Council to see if there are any groups of people who may find it difficult to become a local councillor e.g. women, young people, carers etc. The project aims to identify simple, inexpensive and practical ways to increase the number and diversity of people willing to stand for election and therefore the number of councils holding elections.

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3. Procurement

Procurement is the process of acquiring goods, works and services, covering both acquisitions from both external and in-house providers. The process spans the whole procurement cycle from identification of needs through to the end of service contract or the end of the useful life of an asset.

As the Council enters into contracts with both private and voluntary organisations for goods, works, services and staff it is essential that the procurement function and practices take account of all aspects of equality legislation to ensure that the procurement process promotes equality of opportunity.

The Council is currently reviewing and updating its Procurement Strategy to ensure that equality issues are considered in all procurement processes. In conjunction with this, the Council is developing the intranet as a staff training/information resource in relation to procurement, which will give guidance on consideration of equalities issues, from the preliminary stages of identifying need right through to the monitoring and review stage. Standardised documentation is also being developed that will reduce the burden on smaller suppliers when contracting with the Council, which will further help to promote equality of opportunity.

The Council's website will also be developed over the coming year to help reduce the barriers which may prevent suppliers trading with the Council. This will include the production of a 'Selling to the Council' guide along with publication of forthcoming tender opportunities.

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Improving how we communicate

During 2007, the Council has become a member of INTRAN, which means that we are able to offer the following services to customers, when communicating with each other.

- Signing
- Lip speaking
- Face-to face interpreting
- Telephone interpreting
- Written translations
- Transcriptions
- Audio translations



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Impact assessments

An Impact Assessment involves looking at a service and assessing the impact it has on men and women, disabled people, black and minority ethnic backgrounds, people of particular faith or belief groups, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender residents as well as young and old people.

In doing these assessments, we are able to ensure access to our services is improved, that any gaps in service and/ or community tensions between people from different backgrounds are addressed.

Housing and Council Tax Benefit impact assessment

The Benefits service is one of three service areas piloting the Impact Assessment process adopted by the Council.

The process started in July, and the action plan will be completed during November.

The principle of paying the right benefit to the right people at the right time encompasses what the service exists for. To achieve this accessibility is paramount for all our stakeholders – those claiming benefit, landlords and other organisations that support the benefit process (Rent Office, Pension Service etc). Accessibility will vary depending on the particular stakeholder concerned.

The Impact Assessment has identified areas where further work needs to be undertaken to either improve access to the service or where further research is needed to gain a greater understanding of what prevents people from using the service. Given the nature of the service there was already considerable awareness of the need to review processes and to identify areas where improvements needed to be made to make the service more accessible. This not only involves working with organisations to access 'hard-to-reach' groups (ie groups that historically the Council has had difficulty in reaching) but just as importantly ensuring that accurate and timely information is passed to relevant organisations enabling any decision making process to be as timely as possible.

The process for the impact assessment was as follows:

■ Identify functions of the service provision

Within the Benefits Service three distinct areas were identified – Housing and Council Tax Benefit Administration, Housing and Council Tax Benefit Fraud, and Customer Services (Front Reception). The review involved officers from the three areas and the Benefits Help and Advice Team

■ Review of policies/practices and procedures across the three areas

This was a gap analysis of what is currently in place to prevent discrimination/alleviate access issues. This identified areas where additional work was required and /or enhancements to existing provisions were needed. In this part of the review it became very clear that a number of other services had a significant impact on how and where

the Benefits Service was delivered. These areas also impacted on how customers and other stakeholders perceived the service. The key service areas were Property Services (reception facilities, access to buildings etc), Communications (web access, signage, publicity etc), Customer Services (telephony, face to face contact, standard of information given to the customer). It was concluded that the two areas that needed to be taken on to the next stage were Benefits Administration and Customers Services.

■ **Data analysis**

The data analysis included reviewing the outcomes from The Benefit Satisfaction Survey 2006/7, outcomes from the report Deprivation in Rural Norfolk 2006, case load statistics and written and anecdotal complaints from stakeholders.

■ **Gap analysis and review of the data held**

Possible actions were identified where adverse impacts existed and/or where there is lack of information on which to base a decision.

■ **Development of an Action Plan** reflecting any budgetary implications.

The analysis indicated a number of actions that needed to be taken. These have been incorporated into the action plan and in some cases work has already started.

Improve monitoring of ethnic minorities – data is now being collected to identify those people from ethnic minorities claiming benefit and analysis is undertaken of fraud investigations and sanctions and complaints.

Improve Benefit take-up – a take-up policy and strategy was introduced in September 2007. Proactive work has been ongoing to improve take-up, particularly with cross referencing information from DWP (Department of Works and Pensions).

Promotion of the Benefits Help and Advice Team – this team provides access to those people who are housebound, providing advice on other available benefits.

Developing links with ‘hard-to-reach’ groups – working with the Council’s Supporting Communities team to identify and set up liaison meetings with these groups.

Review of documentation – Claim form to be reviewed for introduction of Local Housing Allowance. This was revised in 2006 to reflect ethnic monitoring requirements. We are investigating available information leaflets that will be easily understandable.

Improve data collection to carry out further analysis of data – Explore this with software providers.

It is intended that key areas from the three pilot assessments are identified and that focus groups are held to gain further information on accessibility of our services.

The outputs from the impact assessment will be incorporated into the team and service plans ensuring that equality and diversity are embedded within our service delivery.

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Communications impact assessment

The function of the Communications Service is to establish and maintain high quality internal and external communications capabilities, so as to raise awareness of the work of the Council and to inform the local community of Council services available to them.

It is therefore of paramount importance that the communications elements of the work of the Council are as accessible to the whole community as far as is both practical and possible. The Impact Assessment enables the identification of both gaps in the

communications process and those areas where greater accessibility to information provided by the Council and a clear flow of information from the community to the Council, might be made possible. A clear, two-way flow of communication is an important tool in helping to cement community cohesion.

The aspects of the Communications team's work that were assessed were Media, Graphic Design, Internet and Intranet (the Web team), and the Communications Strategy as a whole, therefore involving the whole Communications team.

A data analysis has been undertaken, identifying gaps in the current communications process. Further information covering the effectiveness of existing channels and the relevance of content of information is required regarding:

- Black and minority ethnic groups
- Travellers and Gypsies
- Sexual orientation
- Younger people
- Staff and Members

An action plan has been prepared for the next, as yet incomplete stage, which is to engage in consultation (through surveys and face-to-face discussions) with those areas of the community where there clearly are information gaps and with whom little communication occurs, and to agree what practical and effective means can be adopted so as to improve communication with those groups.

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Property Services

By the very nature of the Property Services remit, it needs to ensure that adequate communication and consultation takes place with all other service providers and users.

The Equality and Diversity Impact Assessments help determine what measures need to be taken to meet shortfalls in service provision.

We have completed the process and have highlighted three main areas for further work.

- Signage (including any voice activated pre-recorded messages)
- Access statements
- Implications resulting from changes in management of 'on-street' parking and opportunities arising from this to consider a more holistic approach to traffic flow/congestion and parking generally.

As part of the on-going process the impact assessment has now been distributed to other Service managers in the first instance to encourage feedback to establish where there may be further gaps. Through the branding group, and under the direction of the Communications Manager, we shall be visiting the question of signage during 2008.

The approach to parking issues will impact across many sectors of the community and so will need to be addressed with great care to ensure a balanced, manageable and fair regime in the future.

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North Norfolk District Council as a place to work

We want the Council to be a place where staff can come to work and expect to be treated with dignity and respect and where they understand that we value diversity. We aim to promote equality of opportunity and challenge all forms of discrimination in our role as a service provider, policy maker, employer, purchaser of goods and services and community leader.

Under the Diversity and Equality Policy we have said we will:

- Ensure that no employee or job applicant receives less favourable treatment than another on the grounds of disability, gender, race, sexuality, age, marital status, religion and national origin
- Ensure that advertising and recruitment processes are accessible to all sections of society, as part of our commitment to developing a workforce that reflects the community we serve
- Ensure that objective job-related criteria apply to all of our employment policies and practices to ensure they are fair. Appointments and promotions to Council posts will be based on merit, qualification and experience
- Create and maintain a workplace where all employees are treated with dignity and respect, and where the need to achieve a balance between work and personal/home responsibilities is recognised
- In recruitment of employees, seek to eliminate any assumptions, preferences or judgements that do not relate to the potential abilities of individuals to perform the required job. This principle will apply to every stage of the recruitment process
- Ensure equality of opportunity for promotion and advancement. A vital element in this is ensuring equal access to training
- Ensure that all employees understand and receive training as appropriate to promote and encourage equal opportunities.

In the table below are the results of our statutory employment performance indicators.

Best Value employment and equality Performance Indicators (BVPI) and targets

BVPI No.	Description	2005/06 Actual Value	2006/07 Actual Value
11a	Top 5% earners: women	31.58%	26.32%
11b	Top 5% earners: minority ethnic communities	0.00%	0.00%
11c	Top 5% earners: with a disability	0.00%	0.00%
16a	Percentage of employees with a disability	2.07%	2.85%
16b	Percentage of economically active disabled community population	15.62%	15.62%
16a/16b	Percentage of employees with a disability compared to population	13.25%	18.25%

17a	Percentage of black and ethnic minority employees	2.1%	1.6%
17b	Percentage of economically active minority ethnic community population	0.8%	0.8%
17a/17b	Percentage of black and ethnic minority employees compared to population	259.0%	193.75%

We are committed to taking all reasonable steps to eliminate any unlawful discrimination that we have identified and to improving our monitoring and scrutiny in this area.

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Employing people from minority ethnic groups

Each year we report on the percentage of black and ethnic minority employees compared to the North Norfolk population. Last year the figure was 193.75 per cent. This is good compared to the national average, meaning we do have a workforce representative of the community we serve.

We also report on the top five per cent of earners who are from minority ethnic communities compared to the percentage of ethnic minorities residents in the District. We are performing poorly in this area, as the figure for last year was zero per cent but we will continue to look for ways to develop our staff further to ensure that staff do have the skills to move forward for promotion. In fact, 10 per cent of the staff who enjoyed promotion for the period 2006/07 were staff registered under the BME category. To contextualise this, it is worth noting that the top five per cent of earners within the Council equates to 19 employees.

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Women

We have to ensure that both men and women have the same opportunities to access the higher paid positions within the Council. The ratio of the top five per cent of earners who are women compared to the percentage of women in the District in 2006/07 was 26.32 per cent. We are performing above average in this area compared with other districts.

Contact: Julie Cooke, Human Resources Manager

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Disabled people

In 2005/06 the percentage of employees with a disability compared to population was 13.25 per cent. increasing to 18.25 per cent for the period 2006/07. Although we are below average compared to other districts, the majority of other districts have not increased their percentage to this extent.

We also have to report on the percentage of top five per cent earners with a disability. The figure reported for 2006/07 was zero per cent. Clearly, this is an area that we need to continue to work on.

To ensure that we always have the most up to date information to report and act on, we will be asking all staff to complete annual monitoring forms. We will then be able to tailor our policies to meet the needs of our workforce and develop policies to ensure that our workforce is representative of the community we serve.

Employee monitoring under the race equality scheme 06/07

As part of the Race Equality Scheme the Council is required to put in place arrangements so that 'as soon as is reasonably practicable' it can meet the duty to monitor, by reference to the racial groups to which they belong:

- the numbers of staff in post
- applicants for employment, training and promotion, from each racial group
- the numbers of staff from each racial group who:
 - receive training
 - benefit or suffer detriment as a results of performance assessment procedures
 - are involved in grievance procedures
 - are the subject of disciplinary procedures
 - cease employment with the Council.

The figures for 2006 are as follows:

	Total number of Employees 06/07	Actual BME % of total 06/07*
The composition of the existing workforce by ethnicity	382	1.55
Recruitment ¹ (applicants for employment based on applicants received, not employees at this stage)	819	4.39
Promotion (includes assimilation to a higher grade)	10	10
Grievance ²	1	0
Disciplinary ²	2	0
Capability ²	0	0
Training and Personal Development Review carried out ³	313	1.59
Cease employment	111	0.90%

* it is not possible to break these figures down further based on the number of BME employees as it would be possible to identify individuals from this data

¹ All appointments are made in accordance with Recruitment Procedures and the Equal Opportunities Policy

² Only those raised under the Council's formal procedures are included

³ Based on appraisal information return to the Human Resources Team

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Preventing and tackling bullying and harassment

The Council already has a bullying policy but we identified earlier in the year that this needs to be improved. We now have a new draft policy which is currently in the initial stages of consultation and the deadline for implementation on the new policy is March 2008.

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A gender profile of staff

We are already able to provide a gender profile of staff and patterns of working based on information we currently hold. What we are not able to ascertain from the data is which staff have caring responsibilities that have influenced their working patterns. We intend to survey all staff in January 2008 to see if they would be happy to provide us with this information to enable us to develop further policies around flexible working. This work will be completed by April 2008.

Contact: Julie Cooke, Human Resources Manager

Email: julie.cooke@north-norfolk.gov.uk Tel: 01263 516040

Return rates of women on maternity leave

A system is already in place to monitor the return rates of women following maternity leave. Those staff who want to return to work are returning in the same job – however, the majority of those returning have changed their working hours at their request.

Contact: Julie Cooke, Human Resources Manager

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Providing a British Sign Language system

We already offer a system for providing British Sign Language via INTRAN (British Sign Language interpreters and lipspeakers on a 24/7 basis) and we have identified an appropriately qualified member of staff who is able to provide an immediate interpretation in an urgent situation.

Contact: Julie Cooke, Human Resources Manager

Email: julie.cooke@north-norfolk.gov.uk Tel: 01263 516040

Exit surveys

Staff leaving the Council complete a short questionnaire designed to identify any areas of dissatisfaction with their employment with the Council. Production of a more comprehensive questionnaire and procedure to introduce exit surveys is underway and due to be completed early next year.

Contact: Julie Cooke, Human Resources Manager

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Pay and grading review and equal pay audit

To comply with the requirements of the 2004 National Pay Agreement a review of the Council's Pay and Grading systems, process and practice will be completed by the end of 2007.

On completion of the Pay and Grading Review, the Council, in accordance with our ongoing commitment to equalities and our policy to bi-annually undertake an Equal Pay Audit, will be undertaking an audit during 2008. The purpose of the audit will be to ensure that the Council's pay and benefits meet best practice standards and also the requirements of Equal Pay legislation.

Contact: Rod Lee, Human Resources Advisor

Email: rod.lee@north-norfolk.gov.uk Tel: 01263 516051

Training and development

Following the successful delivery of training identified in the Council's Disability Equality Awareness Scheme, during 2007/08 it is the Council's intention to develop programmes of equality training to:

- Support the corporate equality scheme and individual service objectives
- Ensure that staff and members are aware of action plans and the implications for services and employment
- Instruct staff how to implement the Standard with contractors and partners
- Inform all staff and members on the detailed implementation of the Equality Standard including action plans and updates on legal and other developments
- Provide information and appropriate training on action plans to support the scrutiny process
- Ensure the programme of training supports the Council's statutory equality schemes in particular
- Establish a system of guidance and training on relevant equality including:
 - Recruitment: short-listing and interviewing
 - Customer services: how to use the hearing loop
holding information surgeries

Contact: Rod Lee, Human Resources Advisor

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How we know if things are improving

We are making many changes to make our services easier for everyone to use. We are keen to hear about your experiences of using our services and whether the improvements we have introduced are working. In the new year we will be setting up a Scrutiny Panel to do just that. If you would like to register an interest in joining the panel, please get in touch with us.

Contact: Kate Sullivan, Community Liaison Officer

Email: kate.sullivan@north-norfolk.gov.uk Tel: 01263 516052

What's in store for 2008?

Next year the following services will be completing impact assessments:

- Emergency planning
- Leisure and cultural services
- Strategic housing
- Economic development

Other work includes:

- Implementing the changes identified in this years impact assessments
- Preparing a Community Cohesion Strategy
- Developing a three-year Equality and Diversity Strategy
- Developing a checklist to help managers and their teams plan services that are more accessible and promote good relations between people of different back grounds
- Staff training
- Completing a staff survey of employees' working experiences within the Council
- Analysis of staff leavers' exit surveys and questionnaires
- Producing our second Annual Equality Report
- Updating the action plans
- Exploring gender inequality and deprivation

Will also continue the work we have started this year including:

- Engaging with black and minority ethnic residents, faith and belief groups, young people, older people, disabled people
- Learning about young peoples' experience of inequality
- Refreshing the race quality scheme
- Raising our partners' awareness of the Equality Duty
- Establishing Gypsy and Traveller sites
- Completing the Procurement project
- Completing the PACE Project

Contact: Kate Sullivan, Community Liaison Officer

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Annual Equality Report

2007/08



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If you would like this document in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact Kate Sullivan on 01263 516052 or email: kate.sullivan@north-norfolk.gov.uk and we will do our best to help
